

Testimony before the Connecticut Public Safety & Security Committee
March 3, 2016

I write in support of Bills SB234 and SB235.

Good morning Chairman Larson, Chairman Dargan, Ranking Member Guglielmo, Ranking Member Zupkus and Members of the Committee

My name is Bob Maynard. I am the First Selectman of the Town of East Windsor.

There are 8 points I would like to make.

1. The State Police have a very dangerous job. I appreciate what they do for the State of Connecticut, and the officers should receive the best training possible.
2. I agree that because of flooding, the Simsbury Firearms Training Facility is no longer adequate to provide the training needs of the Connecticut State Police.
3. The concepts put forth in bills SB234 and SB235 are admirable and I would ask that the final legislation remain true to the intent of these two bills.
4. One primary intent of the two bills is to prevent locating the CSP Firearms Training Facility in East Windsor or Willington. Locating the Firearms Training Facility in East Windsor was a flawed concept from inception; because using the East Haven National Guard Firearms Training Facility was not initially scrutinized. Major Gen. Thaddeus Martin indicated the East Haven facility can accommodate the Connecticut State Police. Joe Courtney advocates using the East Haven facility. When there is an emergency in Connecticut, the CSP and the National Guard will have to work together. If the two groups establish personal relationships by sharing the same facility on a daily basis, that would serve the State well in times of emergency. Also since the State is currently facing a 900 million dollar deficit, it makes financial sense to share the East Haven Firearms Training Facility. Collaboration among state entities is fundamental to the future success of the State of Connecticut.
5. The residents of East Windsor and Town of East Windsor oppose the location of the Firearms Training Facility in East Windsor. When the proposed location in East Windsor was announced, 400 people signed a petition to hold a Town Meeting. At the Town Meeting the vote was 161 to 8 against the location. Consequently, the Board of Selectmen committed the Town to oppose the location.
6. For many reasons, East Windsor would like to see this problem settled legislatively.

7. The CSP Firearms Training Facility is not a part of East Windsor's Plan of Conservation and Development that is filed with the State.

8. Finally, East Windsor has a community and character that is cherished by its residents and provides richness for all the people of the State to enjoy. The first sentence on the home page of the East Windsor website reads, "Incorporated in 1768, today's East Windsor strives to preserve its quiet, small town feel". East Windsor has been an integral part of the State for over two centuries. East Windsor is proud of and has preserved much of its heritage. We are a farming community. We grow potatoes, tobacco, corn and livestock. Many days when I arrive at the Town Hall I will hear a rooster crow. In late summer on State Route 140, I will find myself behind a tractor going 20 miles an hour. The tractor is pulling a 15 foot trailer with wobbly wheels and carrying racks of tobacco leaves. I don't mind the slow down, because I enjoy being a part of East Windsor's culture. A Firearms Training Facility would harm East Windsor, its people and its culture.